

January 29, 2009

TEAM VALOR BUYS 3-YEAR-OLD SOUTH AFRICAN FILLY SWEET THERESA, GRADE 3 WINNER REMAINS WITH VETERAN TRAINER ORMOND FERRARIS, STABLE HOLDS DOMINANT HAND IN JOHANNESBURG'S SOPH FILLY RANKS



In a move to strengthen its already strong hold on the 3-year-old filly division in Johannesburg, Team Valor International has acquired from trainer Ormond Ferraris (left) and his Hong Kong-based trainer son David the Grade 3-winning filly Sweet Theresa.

In her most recent outing on November 29, the powerful bay filly overcame an outside draw in a field of 15 other sophomore fillies to demonstrate that she had gears while fashioning a highly impressive 3 ¼-length victory in the Grade 3 Hertz Fillies Mile at Turffontein.

Barry Irwin, who had been on hand in November when Sweet Theresa completely dismantled her field in the Hertz Mile, said "She obviously is pretty hot stuff at around a mile. She is a half-sister to Starlit, who was probably best at 6 to 7 furlongs and had the class to last a mile in the Fillies Guineas in Cape Town. Whether she will go on to 9 or 10 furlongs remains to be seen, but whatever her trip turns out to be, she is a very high-class individual that can rise to the top. We are thrilled to have her under our banner.

"Having her under our ownership also makes it a lot easier to plan a campaign for all of our various fillies in Johannesburg. It is also nice that Ormond Ferraris, who picked her out as a yearling, has known her since the beginning of her training, so there is no learning curve involved."

Sweet Theresa is expected to be pointed for the Grade 2 Gauteng Fillies Guineas at the end of February at Turffontein. She is by Smart Strike's emerging brother Strike Smartly and hails from an American family with which Team Valor is quite familiar.



Team Valor already has two other 3-year-old fillies of note with veteran conditioner Ferraris in the Grade 1 winner Gypsy's Warning and the stunning debut maiden winner Catch the Wind. The former won her last start after finishing a fast-closing third against older distaffers in the Grade 2 Ipi Tombe Stakes behind Emblem of Liberty, who went on to beat Dancer's Daughter for the Grade 1 Paddock Stakes in Cape Town. Catch the Wind was an "off the screen" winner of her only start, sustained a small bone chip and is back in training.

Additionally, Team Valor International is represented in Johannesburg by On Her Toes, a yearling buy trained by Mike Azzie, for whom she dead-heated for a win last year in the Grade 1 Allan Robertson Fillies Championship. In her only outing at 3, she was a stylish winner in Durban.